

THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART

Public Information Department, 11150 East Blvd., Cleveland, Ohio 44106; 216/421-7340

PRESS RELEASE

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Lutes, Lovers and Lyres: Musical Imagery in the Collection Through June 11, 1989

The Museum's finest 17th- to 19th-century stringed instruments--chosen from a collection that is rarely exhibited--and its best examples of musical themes and motifs in paintings, sculpture, decorative arts, prints, textiles, and manuscript illustrations make up **Lutes, Lovers and Lyres: Musical Imagery in the Collection**, on view through June 11, 1989. The forty works in the exhibition represent many Western countries and cultures, from ancient Greece to 19th-century Europe. Numerous public programs complement this exhibition which shows the age-old relationship between the visual and musical arts.

The exhibition's centerpiece is the Museum's 17th-century Venetian lute, rare and possibly unique for its small size, restored by Ray Nurse of British Columbia, the premier lute and viol maker in North America, who worked on the instrument in the Museum's conservation department during March and April of 1988. While dismantling the lute he found inside its rounded belly fragments of a 16th-century German Catholic missal--probably discarded during the Reformation--that had been used in an 18th-century repair. Photographs taken during the restoration will be on view. The Museum's lute (ca. 1630) is almost identical to the lute in a painting exhibited with it, A Still Life with Musical Instruments by Evaristo Baschenis (1607-1677), on long-term loan to the Museum; most of Baschenis's detailed, dramatically lit still lifes of instruments and music are still in Bergamo, Italy, where the priest-painter lived. "R.E.," who signed the Museum's lute, probably worked in the Matteo Sallas workshop in Venice--the city that was the

center of lute making from the 16th century on--near where Michael Hartung ("M.H." of the lute in the Baschenis painting) lived and worked.

A polychromed wood angel by the Austrian artist Hans Schnatterpeck (ca. 1503) plays an earlier lute, as does an old, turbaned King David, whose musical talents are described in the Bible, portrayed in tempera and gold in a page from an Italian Psalter (ca. 1408). Such illuminated manuscripts as the Psalter and a Book of Hours (ca. 1404) made for Charles the Noble, King of Navarre, were a bridge between the religious world of the monks who made them and secular life, and often pictured saints and angels playing musical instruments of that time.

An ornament from an Etruscan bronze vessel (probably early 4th c. BC) shows a man playing the auloi (double reed-pipe), an instrument popular in the countryside of the classical world that is related to the aulos (single reed-pipe) portrayed in a weaving of The Piping Maenad from Byzantine Egypt (AD 6th c.). The Museum's French harp (17th or 18th c.) is like the ones depicted on a French marquetry worktable (1760), which pictures a variety of other stringed and wind instruments in intricately carved and inlaid wood, and in a German or Spanish chasuble (priest's vestment) of the last quarter of the 17th century, covered with silk and metallic embroidery, probably made for a wedding ceremony.

The only instrument on loan to the exhibition, a viola da gamba from the Caldwell Collection of Viols in Oberlin, is much like one in Pieter de Hooch's painting of a middle-class Dutch family making music together, The Music Party (1663). A similar instrument appears among the silk-stockinged romancers in Jean Baptiste Pater's painting of dancing and seduction, Minuet in a Pavillion (early 18th c.).

Mariana Carpinisan, Assistant Curator in the Department of Education and Public Programs, who organized the exhibition, will present gallery talks at 1:30 pm on Wednesday, February 15, and Sunday, February 19. She will also lecture on Wednesday, March 29, at 2:15 pm, on "Sounds in Silent Media--The Relationship Between Art and Music." On Wednesday, April 5, also at 2:15 pm, Kenneth Bé, lutenist and Mellon Fellow in Paintings Conservation at the Museum, and Ross Duffin, Kulas Professor of Music at Case Western Reserve University, will give a lecture/demonstration on "The Sound of Early Western Instruments." Dr. Duffin assisted in selecting the objects for this exhibition based on his catalogue (in progress) of musical iconography in the Museum's collection.

On Wednesday, April 12, at 8 pm, three outstanding performers of early music--Julianne Baird, soprano, Konrad Junghänel, lute, and Kenneth Slowik, viola da gamba--will collaborate in a concert depicting love's passion and drama, called "The Many Faces of Love: Music of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries." Tickets for this concert are available by telephone reservation beginning March 30 (call 421-7340, ext. 282, between 10 am and 3 pm). Single tickets are priced at \$10, \$9, and \$8 (Museum members, senior citizens and students \$8, \$7, and \$6).

The exhibition was organized in conjunction with the Music Library Association's 1989 National Meeting at the Museum on March 12 through 18. A poster featuring a full-size color picture of the Museum's lute will be available in the Bookstore. Admission to the Museum, the exhibition, and all programs **except the April 12 concert**, is free.

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For more information, photographs, or color slides, please contact Denise Horstman, Public Information Office, The Cleveland Museum of Art, 11150 East Boulevard, Cleveland, Ohio 44106; 216/421-7340.